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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/941,936	08/30/2001	Brigitte Bathe	32301WD202	6329

441 7590 06/04/2003

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EXAMINER

KERR, KATHLEEN M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1652

DATE MAILED: 06/04/2003

11

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/941,936

Applicant(s)

BATHE ET AL.

Examiner

Kathleen M Kerr

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 April 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-32 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

DETAILED ACTION

Application Status

1. Claims 1-32 are pending in the instant application

Restriction

2. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. § 121:
 - I. Claims 1-12 and 30, drawn to polynucleotides coding for the sigC gene, vectors and host cells thereof, classified in class 536, subclass 23.1.
 - II. Claim 13, drawn to a *Corynebacterium* strain containing a shuttle vector, classified in class 435, subclass 252.32.
 - III. Claims 14-29, drawn to methods of making L-amino acids, classified in class 435, subclass 106.
 - IV. Claims 31-32, drawn to methods for isolating nucleic acids related to the sigC gene, classified in class 435, subclass 6.
3. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Groups I and II are related because the vector of Group II is the base vector for a specialized vector in Group I. However, this specialized vector is in Group I because it contains a gene for sigC; this particular feature is not in the base vector of Group II. Thus, the technical feature is not shared between Groups I and II and these Groups are patentably distinct. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in

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the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Group I is related to Groups III and IV as product and process of use. The inventions can be shown to be distinct if either or both of the following can be shown: (1) the process for using the product as claimed can be practiced with another materially different product or (2) the product as claimed can be used in a materially different process of using that product (M.P.E.P. § 806.05(h)). In the instant case, the polynucleotides can be used for a materially different process of using that product, such as in the recombinant production of the encoded enzyme. Thus, Group I is patentably distinct from Group II and III. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Group II is related to Groups III and IV as being a base vector into which sigC can be inserted for use in the methods of Groups III and IV. However, the particulars of this base vector are not required for the practice of the methods. Thus, Group II is patentably distinct from Groups III and IV. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Groups III and IV are related as processes using the same polynucleotides. However, the Groups are distinct because they require distinct method steps using distinct reagents to produce distinct products. Moreover, these distinct methods are not disclosed as being used together. Thus, Groups II and III are patentably distinct. Because these inventions are distinct for the

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reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Notice of Possible Rejoinder

4. The Examiner notes that if product claims in Group I are found directed to an allowable product, then process claims in Groups III and IV, which are directed to processes of using the patentable product, previously withdrawn from consideration as a result of a restriction requirement, would now be rejoined pursuant to the procedures set forth in the Official Gazette notice dated March 26, 1996 (1184 O.G. 86; see also M.P.E.P. § 821.04, *In re* Ochiai, and *In re* Brouwer). Since process claims would be rejoined and fully examined for patentability under 37 C.F.R. § 1.104, Applicants are instructed to amend said claims as deemed necessary according to rejections made against the elected claims.

Election

5. A telephone call was made to Robert Weilacher on June 3, 2003 to request an oral election to the above restriction requirement, but did not result in an election being made.

Applicant is advised that the reply to this requirement to be complete must include an election of the invention to be examined even though the requirement be traversed (37 C.F.R. § 1.143).

Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.48(b) if one or more of the currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the

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application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 C.F.R. § 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(i).

Conclusion

6. A complete response to the instant Office action must include an election of invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kathleen M Kerr whose telephone number is (703) 305-1229. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, from 8:30am to 5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ponnathupura Achutamurthy can be reached on (703) 308-3804. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications and (703) 872-9307 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.

KMK

June 3, 2003

